REMARKS

This amendment responds to the office action mailed December 26, 2003. In the office action the Examiner:

- rejected claims 38 and 46 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hansen et al. (5,778,419) and over Quattromani et al. (5,740,398); and

- objected to claims 39-45 and 47-54 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

After entry of this amendment, the pending claims are: claims 38-54.

Allowable subject matter

The Examiner, in the office action, indicated that claims 39-45 and 47-54 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Applicants, accordingly, have rewritten claims 39 and 47 as independent claims including all the limitations of their respective base claims 38 and 46. Therefore, claims 39 and 47 as rewritten and their respective dependent claims 40-45 and claims 48-52 are considered in condition for allowance.

Claim rejections - 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 38, as amended, recites in pertinent a memory system comprising "... [a] master memory device configured to generate control information ... including a plurality of write commands ... *followed by any operation code other than a read or write command to the slave memory device* and then followed by a read command to [a] slave memory device; and the slave memory device configured to process the read command *delayed according to the operation code other than a read or write command to the slave memory device* prior to completing the processing of at least one of the plurality of write commands without causing a column resource conflict at a memory core of the slave memory device".

Support for the amendment can be found in the specification, e.g., Fig. 13 and paragraphs 0143 and 0144. For instance, a timing diagram in Fig. 13 illustrates that a "no-op" operation code is inserted between four consecutive write commands and a read command. The "no-op" operation code is introduced to delay the read command so as to avoid a conflict on the column resources of memory device 100. This allows a read operation to interrupt a stream of write operations without causing the data held in the write buffer to be overwritten.

Hansen re-sequences read and write operations by setting priorities for read/write requests. In particular, the read requests are granted higher priorities than the write requests by a requester arbiter. But Hansen and Quattromani, neither alone nor in combination, teach the limitation of separating a read and write operations using an operation code other than read or write and then delaying the read operation according to the operation code to avoid a conflict between the read and write operations. Therefore, the Applicants believe that claim 38 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 46, as amended, recites limitations similar to claim 38. Therefore, claim 46 and its dependent claims 53-54 are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider this application with a view towards allowance. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (650) 849-7721 if a telephone call could help resolve any remaining items.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: April 22, 2004   31,066
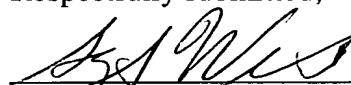
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